



Illustration from 'Manual of the Grasses',
A. S. Hitchcock, 2nd ed. 1950, USDA
Misc. Publ. 200

PHIPPSIA ALGIDA
ICE GRASS

Ice Grass is a glabrous perennial with fibrous roots and densely tufted stems that are up to 7 cm high. The narrow leaves have a prow-like tip. The 1-flowered spikelets are borne in a narrow, terminal inflorescence that is ca. 1/3 the length of the stem. Each spikelet has 2 minute glumes shorter than the lemma. The thin, 3-nerved lemma is ca. 1.5 mm long and is blunt with a short point. The palea is slightly smaller and has a shallowly-toothed margin. Flowering and fruiting in August.

Species of POA also have prow-like leaf tips, but have many-flowered spikelets. Species of AGROSTIS have 1-flowered spikelets, but the glumes are longer than the lemma. A hand lens is needed for positive identification.